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BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES

"THERE GOES YOUR DAMNED GOSPEL SHOP!" THE CHURCHES AND CLERGY AS VICTIMS OF SHERMAN'S MARCH THROUGH SOUTH CAROLINA

DAVID B. CHESEBROUGH*

Though General William Tecumseh Sherman issued orders to advance into South Carolina on January 19, 1865, heavy rains delayed serious troop movement northward until February 1. His men had already demonstrated throughout Georgia that they had little sympathy for the southern people, but a particular and intense feeling of anger and dislike existed toward the citizens of the state they were now entering. South Carolinians were viewed as the people who began the secession movement and then fired the first shots of the Civil War. Thus, from the highest officers to the lowliest men in the ranks, Sherman's army sought revenge upon the people and institutions of South Carolina. Neither the churches nor the clergy would escape this special wrath.

Sherman anticipated South Carolina's fate in a December letter to Major General H. W. Halleck, the chief-of-staff in Washington, D.C. "The truth is," he wrote, "the whole army is burning with an insatiable desire to wreck vengeance upon South Carolina. I almost tremble at her fate, but feel that she deserves all that seems in store for her."[1] Chaplain G.S. Bradley, who was a part of Sherman's forces, echoed a similar sentiment: "Every soldier in the army feels a sort of hatred against this State, and consequently it will be pretty hard to restrain them...."[2]

HARDEEVILLE, YEMASSEE

One of the first communities in South Carolina to be invaded by the advancing army was Hardeeville. There, one of the town's largest and loveliest houses of worship was completely demolished by men of the Twentieth Corps. After the pulpit and pews had been carried from the building, the siding was ripped off. The corner posts were then cut, which caused the towering and majestic spire to come crashing down into what was left of the building. As the walls broke apart, the soldiers yelled out to the sorrowful and apprehensive citizens watching on: "There goes your

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[1]William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman by Himself* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1875), Vol. 2, pp. 227-228.

[2]Rev. G. S. Bradley, *The Star Corps, or Notes of an Army Chaplain During Sherman's Famous "March to the Sea"* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Jermain & Brightman, Book Job Printers, 1865), p. 246.

damned gospel shop!"[3] Most of the other buildings in Hardeeville were either burned or torn down to make room and provide shelters for the troops. One of Sherman's soldiers, James T. Ayers, said the community literally disappeared.[4]

Near Yemassee, Sherman's troops came upon the historic Old Sheldon Episcopal Church. During the Revolutionary War, British troops burned the church because colonists allegedly drilled inside the church grounds and stored ammunition in the above-ground tombs in the church cemetery. Forty years later the church was rebuilt, only to be torched again as Union forces entered the vicinity. Today, only the weathered church walls still stand.[5]

ORANGEBURG

Federal troops entered Orangeburg on February 12 after some resistance from soldiers and citizens of the community. Portions of the town, especially stores, were burning. High winds and a lack of desire from Union soldiers to put out the fires caused half of the town to be reduced to ashes by the time the flames were extinguished. David Conyngham, a newspaper reporter for the New York *Herald*, wrote of buildings that escaped the conflagration in Orangeburg: "The tasteful churches, with their tall steeples, and about fifty private homes, alone escaped."[6]

As in Georgia, Sherman's troops lived off the land and the possessions of the people. Special bands of foragers would frequently take everything of value they could carry. Sometimes these foragers, or "bummers", committed rape. The evidence indicates that incidents of rape upon white women by Union soldiers were relatively few. There were, however, numerous rapes of black women. One instance of a white woman being

[3]Stephen F. Fleharty, *Our Regiment: History of the One Hundred and Second Illinois Infantry Volunteers with Sketches of the Atlanta Campaign, the Georgia Raid, and the Campaign of the Carolinas* (Chicago: Brewster and Hanscom, 1865), p. 132.

[4]John Hope Franklin, ed., *The Diary of James T. Ayers* (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Society, 1947), p. 74.

[5]Albert Sidney Thomas, *A Historical Account of the Protestant Episcopal Church in South Carolina, 1820-1957* (Columbia, S.C.: R.L. Bryan Co., 1957), pp. 72-73. Rev. Thomas adds, "The Mission Chapel, in the same parish, built by Rev. S. Elliott for the negroes on the Combahee, was taken down by Sherman's troops in order to build a bridge over that river."

[6]Capt. David P. Conyngham, *March Through the South, With Sketches and Incidents of the Campaign* (New York: Sheldon and Company, 1865), p. 323.

raped happened not far from Columbia. Confederate scouts, in search of foragers,[7] came upon a farmhouse where they found an older man sobbing with uncontrolled grief. The man, a Baptist minister, choking on his tears, told the scouts, "My daughter. A bunch of Yankees raped her — they just left here." The scouts rode on in rapid pursuit. A few miles down the road they overtook the band of foragers, killing all of them except a young soldier who had satisfied them that he had nothing to do with the rape.[8]

COLUMBIA

On February 17, the city of Columbia, the state capital of South Carolina, formally surrendered to Sherman and his army. That night, a fire, fanned by the winds, swept through the city. By the next morning, two-thirds of the city lay in ashes. The responsibility for the conflagration has been a subject of continued and passionate debate.[9] It is not the purpose of this work to assess responsibility but rather to relate what happened to the churches and clergy in the doomed city.

The Rev. A. Toomer Porter, a refugee Episcopal minister from Charleston and an ardent secessionist, told of his reactions to hearing "Yankee Doodle" emanating from the Union troops entering Columbia on the morning of the seventeenth. He would, he recalled, have preferred to hear

[7]Because the foragers were small groups of men who usually operated in isolation, they were often chased about the countryside by Confederate scouting parties. When caught, the foragers suffered dire consequences, often death. "In Georgia, Sherman's army recovered at least 64 bodies of Union soldiers, and in the Carolinas a minimum of 109 more, either hanged, shot in the head from very close range, or with their throats slit; in a few cases someone had actually butchered them. Many times the culprits placed the bodies alongside a main road for all Union troops to see and pinned signs on them such as 'Death to all foragers' or 'Hear Hangs Hams.' Joseph T. Glatthaar, *The March to the Sea and Beyond* (New York: New York University Press, 1985), p. 128.

[8]Burke Davis, *Sherman's March* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1980, Vintage Books, 1988), pp. 151-152.

[9]In his *Memoirs*, Sherman recalls: "Many of the people thought that this fire was deliberately planned and executed. This is not true. It was accidental...." Vol. 2, pp. 287. Allan Nevins has written that there is no one answer that is completely convincing as to "Who burned Columbia?" He goes on to summarize: "Three main theories have found support: first, the fires spreading from burning cotton were ignited by irresponsible vagabonds and some drunken retreating troopers; second, that Sherman willfully ordered the city burned, an allegation that he strongly denied, and that seems incredible; third, that released prisoners, emancipated slaves, and/or intoxicated soldiers or vagrant Southerners were responsible. For each hypothesis some circumstances can be found to offer partial support except the allegation that Sherman deliberately fired the city." *The War for the Union: Vol. IV, The Organized War to Victory. 1864-1865* (New York: Scribners, 1947), pp. 260-261.

the calling of Gabriel's trumpet than to listen to those "Yankee Melodies."[10] Later in the day, Porter was instrumental in saving the South Carolina College Library through his pleas to General Sherman. The general icily replied to the minister's request, "I would rather give you books than destroy them. I am sure your people need them very much."[11]

Porter recalled a better kind of incident during the federal occupation of Columbia. When he was accosted on the street by a drunken Union sergeant, the minister was rescued by Lieutenant John A. McQueen of the Fifteenth Illinois who then forced the sergeant to apologize to the clergyman. McQueen deplored the treatment that Sherman's troops had inflicted upon the inhabitants of the city. The southern minister and northern military officer forged a friendship. Porter commented that McQueen was one of the finest persons he had ever known, "a brave soldier, a chivalrous enemy, a devoted friend, and a most devout and honest Christian gentleman." Just before McQueen left the city with the army, Porter attempted to give the lieutenant a piece of his wife's jewelry as a token of appreciation and friendship. McQueen refused lest someone should think he had stolen the jewelry. Porter then wrote letters to Confederate commanders urging that McQueen be treated with great consideration in the event that he was captured.[12] A short time later McQueen was severely wounded and captured at Darlington, South Carolina. Porter went to visit him and secured a pass for him to return behind the Union lines. The two men remained friends for the rest of their lives.

The Rev. P. J. Shand, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church, experienced the burning of both his church and parsonage. As he, a servant, and his wife attempted to carry a trunk filled with the communion silver of the church to safety, they were stopped by five Union soldiers. The soldiers demanded a key to the trunk, but Shand had no key. The soldiers, angry at the unsatisfactory response, demanded the minister's watch. When Shand responded that he had no watch, the anger of the soldiers increased. They roughly searched the cleric and discovered he was telling the truth. The

[10]Anthony Toomer Porter, *The History of a Work of Faith and Love in Charleston, South Carolina* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1881), p. 112.

[11]William Gilmore Simms, *Sack and Destruction of the City of Columbia* (Columbia, S.C.: Power Press of Daily Phoenix, 1865, repr., A.S. Salley, ed., Freeport, N.Y.: Books For Libraries Press, 1932), p. 62. Sherman was reflecting a prevalent northern view that Southerners were not well-read. Lloyd Lewis relates that Sherman told Porter that if the South Carolinians had made better use of the library, they would have known too much history to start the war. *Sherman, Fighting Prophet* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1932), p. 504.

[12]John G. Barrett, *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1956), pp. 86-87.

soldiers then departed with the trunk.[13] The trunk and its contents were later returned to Shand upon the orders of Major General John A. Logan.[14]

An old woman slave, belonging to Shand, experienced a worse fate than her owner. After several assaults upon her by Yankee soldiers, one of her attackers proposed that they "finish the old bitch." She was then "put into a ditch and her head held under water until life was extinct."[15]

The Reverend Shand provides an example of how much many of the people in the South were suffering economically even before the coming of Sherman's troops. Prior to the war his annual salary was $1,800. Over the next four war years, his salary was never increased though the cost of living rose dramatically. In 1864, Shand's bill for firewood alone was $5,000.[16]

Shand held Sherman personally responsible for the terrors and destruction of Columbia. In a letter to a northern friend in 1868, Shand attributed the blame "to General Sherman and to him alone." The minister wrote that though Sherman may not have "literally ordered" the burning of the city, he "winked and connived" while his troops were about their mischief. Sherman, accused Shand, gave his army the impression that they were free to create havoc in Columbia.[17]

Dr. G. W. Howe, minister and professor at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Columbia, complained that he was a victim of both Confederate and Union forces:

> I went to General Hampton [the Confederate general in charge of defending Columbia], on hearing that he intended to destroy the bridge over the Congaree River, which was mainly owned by the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and begged him not to do so. I stated to him that his forces were entirely insufficient to oppose the army of General Sherman, that burning the bridge would only exasperate his [Sherman's] army, and would probably be used as a pretext for pillaging the city, that, at most, it would only delay their progress for a few hours, and that the bridge was owned by a charitable institution. He became very angry at me,

[13]Davis, *Sherman's March*, pp. 171-172.

[14]Marion Brunson Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1976), p. 105n.

[15]Barrett, *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas*, p. 85. Barrett's source for this was "Notes on the Burning of Columbia," Miscellaneous Manuscripts and Copies of Letters, Daniel Heyward Trezevant Papers, South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

[16]Thomas Osborn, *The Fiery Trail: A Union Officer's Account of Sherman's Last Campaign*, edited, with an introduction by Richard Harwell and Philip N. Racine (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1986), p. 154.

[17]Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia*, p. 153.

> bade me go — and threatened to hang me — using many abusive epithets. I was seized, hustled, and my life threatened by some of your [Union] men during the night of the 17th. My house was fired three times by the pillagers, and was put out by myself, assisted by a few of your men. I appealed to many officers and men for protection, but most of them laughed at me. I stated that I was a minister of the gospel, and was told in reply that preachers were the greatest rascals and meanest rebels in the South, the very fellows they were after. Even when I asked for assistance in saving my house, they coolly informed [me] that they owned no property in the town.[18]

Not everyone was accosted or bothered that day when Union troops entered the city. The Reverend Robert Wilson, like Porter a refugee from Charleston, commented that he walked through the streets of Columbia and did not receive trouble from anyone.[19]

Escaped Union prisoners fled to occupied Columbia and told their tales of Confederate atrocities in the prison camps. These lurid accounts only intensified the vengeful spirits of Sherman's men. Conyngham reported that escaped prisoners, however, also spoke of acts of kindness in the midst of barbaric conditions: "Private individuals showed that charity is universal by attending them (prisoners) under all risks. They spoke in the highest terms of that attendance of the Sisters of Charity in the different bastiles. The ill treatment of our prisoners is the greatest blot on the reputation of the South."[20]

One of the best known incidents of the Columbia fire was the burning of the Ursuline Convent. The convent was also an academy for wealthy girls from throughout the state. Even some well-to-do Protestant families, desiring a good education for their daughters, sent their girls to the institution. Sixty students, along with the nuns, watched the first contingent of Union soldiers pass their institution on the morning of February seventeenth.

Mother Superior Baptista Lynch had heard the horror stories which gathered about Sherman's march. Her concern was tempered somewhat by the fact that she had been a college friend of Sherman's wife and had been a teacher of Sherman's daughter, Minnie, in previous years. She sent an appeal to Sherman for protection. Seeking to calm her fears, Sherman sent an officer, Colonel Charles Ewing, who was also his brother-in-law, to the

[18]George W. Pepper, *Personal Recollections of Sherman's Campaigns in Georgia and the Carolinas* (Zanesville, Il.: Hugh Dunne, Publisher, 1866), p. 316.

[19]Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia*, p. 90.

[20]Conyngham, *March Through the South*, p. 336.

convent with promises of protection and assurances that the inhabitants of the institution had nothing to fear.[21]

That night as the fire began to spread through the city, sparks from other buildings began to fall upon the convent. About eleven o'clock, the nuns and their charges abandoned their school. At that time, "sparks and pieces of burning wood" were falling "so thick" that holes were burned in the veils and dresses of several of the nuns.[22] No sooner had the nuns and pupils departed from the academy than the guards, who had been sent by Sherman to protect the property, began to pillage and carry off valuable articles before the flames finally put an end to their theft.[23]

Burke Davis has written in vivid and dramatic terms as to what it was like for those evacuees of Ursuline Convent and Academy that night:

> The girls filed past the cursing men into the night.... Father O'Connell led, followed by Sister Baptista. Sara Aldrich, whose mother had sent her here from Barnwell, thought she would remember the scene for life: "Not a cry, not a moan. The roaring of the fires, the scorching flames on either side ... did not create the least disorder. That majestic figure of the Mother Superior in the graceful black habit of the Ursuline Order ... the long line of anxious, white young faces of the schoolgirls...."[24]

The Ursuline refugees made their way to a Catholic Church in the city where they were visited by Sherman the next day. Sara Aldrich recalled that meeting between the Mother Superior and General Sherman:

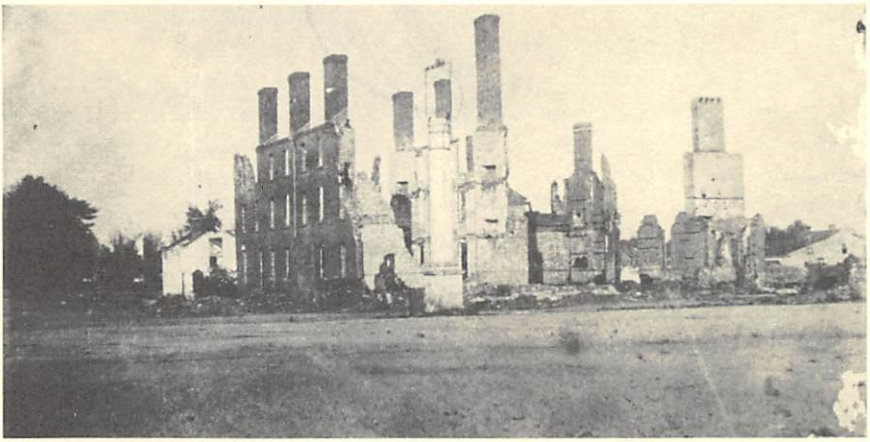
> As he approached the mother superior, he removed the cigar he was smoking; in his embarrassment, he restored it to his lips, nervously chewing it.... General Sherman began explaining how the fire got beyond his control from buildings he had to burn, and blamed our men for leaving liquor in the city, etc.
>
> This irritated rather than pacified the mother superior. With a sweep of the strong, aristocratic hand, in the direction of her Convent, and the still burning city, she said, "General, this is how

[21]In his *Memoirs*, Sherman writes: "I received a note in pencil from the Lady Superioress of a convent or school in Columbia.... My recollection is, that I gave the note to my brother-in-law, Colonel Ewing ... with instructions to see this lady, and assure her that we contemplated no destruction of any private property in Columbia at all." Vol. 2, pp. 279-280.

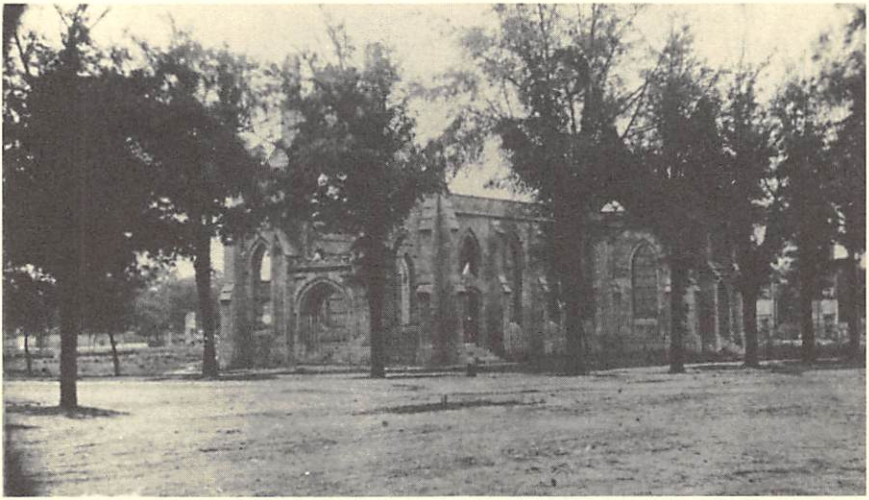
[22]Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia*, p. 99.

[23]Barrett, *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas*, p. 83.

[24]Davis, *Sherman's March*, p. 170.



The Ruins of Ursuline Convent and Academy, Columbia.
Photo courtesy of South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.
The Ruins of Washington Street Methodist Church, Columbia.
Photo courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.



The Ruins of Christ Episcopal Church, Columbia.
Photo courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.
The Ruins of Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Columbia
Photo courtesy of South Caroliniana Library.

you kept your promise to me, a cloistered nun."

He ... began immediately to speak, offering her any of the houses "left standing" as a gift. Slightly bowing her head, and with a sad, sarcastic curve of her lips, she answered, "General Sherman, I do not think the houses left are yours to give, but when I do make arrangements for my community and pupils, I will thank you to move us and provide food for the large number it will be hard to feed."[25]

Sherman did secure better lodging and facilities for them, appointing Colonel Ewing and another officer to watch over and provide for them. Bedding and food supplies were sent in. A few days later the mansion of General John S. Preston became the new location of the convent and school. When Union troops left the city on February 20, a ten days' supply of rations was provided for the nuns and their charges.[26]

Four blocks from the Ursuline Convent was St. Mary's College. Its buildings, too, were pillaged and burned. Father Lawrence P. O'Connell wrote a report summarizing the losses connected with the destruction of St. Mary's College:

St. Mary's College ... was robbed, pillaged and then given to flames. The College was a very fine brick building, and capable of accommodating over one hundred students. It had an excellent library attached, which was selected with great care, and with no limited view to expense. It also possessed several magnificent paintings, executed in Rome, and presented to the institution by kind patrons. Besides the property belonging to St. Mary's College, that of four priests, who were its professors and lived there, was also consumed. Each, as is always the case amongst the Catholic clergy, had his individual collection of books, paintings, statuary, sacred pictures, etc. Nobody ... can possibly realize the losses sustained by these gentlemen. Manuscripts of rare value, notes taken from lectures of the most eminent men in Europe and America, orations, sermons, etc., are treasures not often valued by the vulgar, but to the compiler they are more priceless than diamonds. Of those who lost all in St. Mary's, three are brothers, viz: Revs. Jeremiah J. O'Connell, Lawrence P. O'Connell, Joseph P. O'Connell, D. D.: and the other, Rev. Augustus J. McNeal.[27]

[25]Katherine M. Jones, *When Sherman Came: Southern Women and the "Great March"* (Indianapolis, In.: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 203-204.

[26]Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia*, p. 120.

[27]Simms, *Sack and Destruction of the City of Columbia*, pp. 61-62.

The Rev. J. J. O'Connell, one of the three O'Connell brothers, wrote after the war that depravity among Sherman's troops was not universal. "All the men were not equally desperate and abandoned, there were many humane and religious men among them, a fact that refutes the charge of universal depravity, frequently used against the corps."[28]

William Gilmore Simms, a prominent southern author, was a resident of Columbia at the time of its burning and thus was an eyewitness to many of the events that took place in that troubled city. His own home was burned to the ground. He wrote a brief book describing the carnage. Understandably, the tone is bitter. At the end of the book he compiled a list of destroyed properties in Columbia. The list includes seven church buildings, a synagogue, the Ursuline Convent and Academy, St. Mary's College, and four pastoral residences.[29]

The edifice called the First Baptist Church was not destroyed, though it was a building that Union forces had specifically marked for destruction. It was at the First Baptist Church that the Secession Convention of South Carolina first met on December 17, 1860, and quickly declared its intention to secede. A smallpox epidemic had caused the convention to move to Charleston where, on December 20, South Carolina officially departed from the Union. A detail of Sherman's soldiers had been sent to destroy the First Baptist Church, which symbolized South Carolina's leadership in the secession movement. The soldiers, not knowing which of the several church buildings was the First Baptist, inquired of a black man, Holland Mitchell, the location of the church. Mitchell, who was the sexton of the marked church, directed the detail to the Washington Street Methodist Church less than a block away. Thus the Methodist Church, where W. G. Conner was the pastor, was set on fire, and the First Baptist Church was spared.[30]

[28]Lucas, *Sherman and the Burning of Columbia*, p. 146.

[29]Simms, *Sack and Destruction of the City of Columbia*, pp. 88-106. Simms lists the following religious institutions that were destroyed: St. Mary's College, Ursuline Convent and Academy, Offices of the *Confederate Baptist*, residence occupied by the Rev. B.M. Palmer, Presbyterian Lecture Room, Old Baptist Church, Lecture Room of Trinity Church, Lutheran Church, a Synagogue, Christ (Episcopal) Church, Trinity parsonage occupied by the Rev. P. J. Shand, the dwelling of the Rev. T.E. Wannamaker, the Methodist parsonage of the Rev. W.G. Conner, Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Lecture Room of the Washington Street Church.

[30]Barrett, *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas*, p. 83. There is some doubt as to which church the sexton pointed to. Simms recalled that it was an older Baptist church that was designated and burned. *Sack and Destruction of the City of Columbia*, p. 97. However most are agreed and the evidence indicates that it was the Washington Street Methodist Church which was burned in place of First Baptist Church.

Conner suffered the burning and destruction of not only his church but his parsonage as well. Three times the church was torched. Twice he was able to extinguish the flames. The third time he could not tend to the church for his home was ablaze and inside was a sick child who needed to be rescued. As Conner emerged from the house with the child wrapped in a blanket, a soldier attempted to seize the blanket. The minister protested, explaining that the child was sick. The soldier, incensed because his authority had been challenged by this rebel preacher, tore the blanket from the child and threw the blanket into the fire. "Damn you," he yelled at the minister. "If you say one more word I'll throw the child after it."[31]

Chaplain Pepper described the devastation of Columbia: "Eighty-five blocks in the city were burned, and Columbia is the Palmyra in the desert. Five thousand citizens were houseless. From the State House to Cottontown, nothing but blackened ruins remained. The beautiful city of Columbia no longer existed."[32]

Some time after the war ended, Sherman testified as to his sentiments over the burning of Columbia. "Though I never ordered it and never wished it, I have never shed any tears over the event, because I believe that it hastened what we all fought for, the end of the war."[33]

WINNSBORO

On February 21, one day after leaving Columbia, a portion of Sherman's army entered Winnsboro. Most of the community's population, upon hearing of Sherman's approach, had fled. One who did remain was the Reverend W.W. Lord, rector of Christ Episcopal Church. Lord and his grossly overweight vestryman pled in vain for the town to be spared.[34] Lord was a refugee from Vicksburg, and some of Sherman's men remembered him with disdain as he "had made himself conspicuous at Vicksburg."[35] Major Nichols, an aide-de-camp of General Sherman, had recollections of the Reverend Lord that were most unfavorable:

> We found here an untamed, impertinent fellow, who practices preaching for a living, one Lord, who formerly presided over an Episcopal Church in the West. This individual, whose life and property had been preserved from the flames of our soldiers, took occasion to insult one of our officers by the utterance of the most

[31]Davis, *Sherman's March*, p. 168.

[32]Pepper, *Personal Recollections*, p. 309.

[33]As quoted in Barrett, *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas*, p. 91.

[34]Ibid., p. 96.

[35]Katherine Theus Obear, *Through the Years in Old Winsboro* (Columbia, S.C.: R.L. Bryan Co., 1940; repr., Spartanburg: The Reprint Company, 1980) p. 65.

"Winnsborough, South Carolina." *Harper's Weekly*, April 1, 1865. From the collections of the South Carolina Historical Society.

> treasonable sentiments. He richly deserved to be placed in the prisoner's gang, and marched along. The intercession of Mrs. Aiken, and his own insignificance, saved him from humiliation.[36]

Christ Episcopal Church was burned to the ground along with thirty other buildings in Winnsboro. Certain sources have reported that some of the soldiers removed the organ from the church before burning it so that they might play "the devil's tunes" on it.[37] The remains of a Confederate soldier had been buried recently in the church graveyard. Union soldiers,

[36]George Nichols, *The Story of the Great March* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1865), p. 175.

[37]John Townscend Trowbridge, *The South: A Tour of its Battlefields and Ruined Cities. A Journey Through the Desolated States, and Talks With the People* (Hartford, Conn.: L. Stebbins, 1866), p. 577.

noting the soil had been disturbed, dug up the grave, hoisted up the coffin and placed it across the open hole in the earth, split the coffin with an axe and left it that way. The soldiers claimed they were "hunting for buried treasure."[38]

MONTICELLO, CAMDEN, CASH'S DEPOT

The Ebenezer Church in nearby Monticello had the flooring and woodwork torn up by Union troops for the purpose of building a bridge across the Little River. One of the soldiers left a message. "The Citizens of the County: 'Please excuse us for defacing your house of worship. It was absolutely necessary to affect a crossing over the Creek.'" The note was signed, "Yankee."[39]

When the Federals arrived at Camden on or about February 22, the lovely home of Bishop Thomas Frederick Davis was left unmolested due to the protection of the aforementioned Lieutenant McQueen. McQueen had befriended yet another Columbia resident, a Dr. Reynolds, and promised to protect in future days anyone whom Reynolds should direct. Bishop Davis was one whom Reynolds had mentioned, and McQueen, true to his character, kept a promise to yet another southern friend he had made during Sherman's march.[40]

The Reverend Dr. John Bachman, a Lutheran minister who had led a prayer at the South Carolina secession convention, was visiting at Cash's Depot, about six miles from Cheraw, when Yankee troops came through. Some of the soldiers had been informed that the family Dr. Bachman and his daughter were visiting had hidden thousands of dollars in gold and silver. When asked about this, Dr. Bachman told the soldiers he did not know where the treasure was hidden or if it even existed. He was taken behind a stable and told he would be sent "to hell in five minutes" if he failed to disclose the whereabouts of the treasure. Cocked pistols were pointed at his head.

[38]Jones, *When Sherman Came*, p. 224. Fresh graves, suspected of being places where Southerners had chosen to hide valuable possessions, were frequently opened by Sherman's troops. Katherine Obear, in her history of Winnsboro, adds a macabre, though unsubstantiated, detail to the opening of this particular grave in Winnsboro. "... [S]eeing this freshly turned earth, the Yankees surmised that some Reb had thought a church yard a safe place to bury his treasures, so they dug to find out. When they found the coffin and opened it, what with disappointment and whiskey, they became inhuman. They took the dead man into the church, dressed him in the vestments found there, placed him in the pulpit, shouted and hurrahed around him and then set the building on fire. I don't know what they did with the body, nor can I vouch for the truth of the story." *Through the Years in Old Winnsboro* p. 68.

[39]Jones, *When Sherman Came*, 223.

[40]Ibid., p. 247.

When Dr. Bachman again denied any knowledge of the gold and silver, "a square-built, broad-faced, large-mouthed, clumsy lieutenant kicked him in the stomach and sent the minister sprawling upon the ground. Several more times Bachman denied knowledge of the treasure and each time he was kicked, pummeled, and knocked off his feet. The lieutenant then struck the minister's left arm with his sheathed sword. The broken arm "hung powerless by Bachman's side." The lieutenant struck the other arm, resulting in "most excruciating" pain. The minister's daughter arrived and appealed to the officer to show mercy and humanity upon this man of God. The lieutenant replied, "I don't believe in a God, a heaven or a hell." He did, however, release Bachman, as the beating of his victim had produced no results.

A few weeks later, Dr. Bachman was in Florence, where word came to him that the soldiers responsible for his beating had been captured. He was asked to come and identify the lieutenant. Bachman agreed, but said he would come only on the condition he could interview the prisoners alone.

With his arm still in a sling, Bachman entered a railway car where the prisoners were held. One man in particular made strenuous attempts to avoid the eyes of the minister. Bachman reported later:

> I approached him slowly, and, in a whisper, asked him: "Do you know me, sir — the old man whose pockets you first searched, to see whether he might have a penknife to defend himself, and then kicked and knocked him down with your fist and heavy scabbard?" He presented the picture of arrant coward, and in a trembling voice implored me to have mercy: "Don't let me be shot; have pity! Old man, beg for me! I won't do it again. For God's sake, save me! Oh, God, help me!"
>
> "Did you not tell my daughter there was no God? Why call on Him now?"
>
> "Oh, I have changed my mind; I believe in a God now."

When Confederate soldiers came to the railway car and asked Dr. Bachman to designate the guilty officer, Bachman walked from the car and drove off in his carriage, never revealing the identity of his tormentor.[41]

[41]An account of this incident is found in John M. Gibson, *Those 163 Days — A Southern Account of Sherman's March From Atlanta to Raleigh* (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1961), pp. 183-185.

CHERAW

On March 3, the Federals entered Cheraw. Chaplain Pepper sensed that the citizens of this community were tired of the war and wanted their government to cease hostilities. Typical of that spirit was the Reverend Dr. Brown, an Episcopal clergyman. At one time he had been a proponent of secession and war. Now, with his church and home both burned, he was ready to declare his loyalty to and love for the Union government.[42]

Chaplain Bradley recalled a very different ecclesiastical incident in Cheraw. "A rebel clergyman" complained that people all along the path of Sherman's army "were becoming very bitter ... on account of the destruction of their property." The chaplain was not sympathetic with such complaints: "Well, let them rage. We have their hatred already, and they have sworn eternal separation, so that any little increase of hate will not materially affect matters. They have the alternative before them in plain English — submission, or coercion and subjugation."[43]

Virginia C. Tarrah was a resident of Cheraw and remembered the stay of Sherman's army in the community:

> For several days the immense army remained in Cheraw, one of those days being Sunday. On the morning of that day, as we lived just across the street from the Presbyterian Church, we were forced to listen to sounds painful in the extreme, but intended for high revelry. A band was placed in the pulpit to furnish music for a company of dancers in the body of the church.[44]

Private Woodrough, a forager from Company H, the 30th Illinois, was found dead by Union soldiers. Attached to his body was the Confederate warning: "Death to Foragers." Sherman had issued a standing order that for every such killing a rebel prisoner would be executed. Woodrough had not been popular with his fellow soldiers, and the regimental commander, Major William Rhoads, was reluctant to carry out the order for a retaliatory execution. However, when Sherman threatened him with a court-martial, Major Rhoads obeyed. An elderly Confederate soldier was executed near Cheraw, an incident that filled most Union observers with regret and remorse.

Captive rebel soldiers were forced to draw lots, and a gray-haired man by the name of Small drew the slip of paper with a black mark on it. That was his death warrant. The victim, assigned to Chaplain Cole, a Baptist minister, was led to a ravine where he was to be shot. Twelve men were

[42]Pepper, *Personal Recollections*, p. 322.
[43]Bradley, *The Star Corps*, p. 264.
[44]Jones, *When Sherman Came*, p. 249.

chosen for the firing squad, six were furnished with bullets, six with blanks. Chaplain Cole prayed with Small who was then asked if he had any final words before his death. Showing only a slight trace of emotion, Small said: "I was forced into the army, never was in battle, never wished the Yankees any harm. I have a large family, all girls. I have been a local Methodist minister." Private Granville B. McDonald, of the 30th Illinois, recalled that "there was much feeling for the man, and tears were shed."[45]

Small was placed against a tree, requesting that he be allowed to lean against it rather than being tied. Major Rhoads granted the request and then ordered his firing squad to take careful aim. The minister was to die instantly and not to experience any suffering. Small was blindfolded and a handkerchief was placed in one of his hands. He was told to drop the handkerchief when he was ready. Hosea Rood, a Wisconsin soldier, described the scene:

> When all was ready, there were a few seconds of death-like stillness and suspense, every eye being riveted on the handkerchief in the old man's fingers; it fluttered to the ground — "Fire!" said the officer — and, as the smoke floated away among the tall pines, our boys looked with sadness and sympathy upon the bleeding corpse of a brave old man who had met death unflinchingly and heroically for the crime of another man.... [I]f, while the old man was holding the handkerchief to drop as a signal for his own death, he had bounded way into the forest, they'd never have run a step to catch him.[46]

Private McDonald met Chaplain Cole some years later at an army reunion in 1912. Each had vivid memories of the execution in the Cheraw vicinity nearly fifty years in the past. McDonald wrote later that Cole felt "it was the saddest day in his life. He said he went into his tent and cried and begged to be excused from witnessing the execution."[47] Yet, McDonald said, the vengeful act was effective, it "put a stop to the killing of our foragers."[48] Rood also tried to discover some justification for the execution: "It seemed sad to all of us that this life must be taken for such a purpose, but we did not know what else could be done. War is a stern business, anyhow,

[45]Granville B. McDonald, *A History of the 30th Illinois Veteran Volunteer Regiment of Infantry* (Sparta, Il.: Sparta News, 1916), pp. 99-100.

[46]W. Hosea Rood, *Company E and the Twelfth Wisconsin Regiment in the War of Rebellion* (Milwaukee, Wis.: Swain & Tate Co., Printers & Publishers, 1893), p. 417.

[47]McDonald, *A History of the 30th Illinois*, p. 101.

[48]Ibid., p. 100.

and it often calls for severe measures. I cannot undertake to say whether or not retaliation is the best thing to be done in such cases."[49]

Early in March, Sherman's army concluded its thirty-five day march through South Carolina, leaving behind a trail of devastation and destruction. The clergy and churches were counted among the victims. A chaplain among Sherman's forces expressed approval for the course of action that had been taken throughout the state: "The thousands of homes she [South Carolina] has filled with mourning, the unnumbered hearts she has wrung with anguish, are all witnesses of the justice of her punishment. Let her drink the cup she has brewed, and lie on the bed she has made."[50] Even Chaplain Pepper, who almost always observed and reacted with compassion, wrote: "South Carolina is reaping at last the consequences of her treason."[51]

Were the clergy and churches singled out as special targets of attack by Sherman's forces? It does not seem likely. There is no documented evidence of such a strategy nor is there any record of formal orders coming from Sherman or any of his subordinates to destroy churches or make life especially miserable for clergymen. Church buildings did not suffer more proportionately than other public buildings. In Orangeburg, it will be recalled, churches were among the few public buildings that survived the fire. Apparently, the only church edifice that was expressly designated for destruction was the First Baptist Church in Columbia. Even in this instance there are no documents to indicate that such an order was given, but the soldiers who sought to burn it down implied that orders had come from somewhere. However, whether there were orders or not, First Baptist was marked for destruction not because it was a church, but because it was the original meeting place of South Carolina's Secession Convention.

Church buildings and ministers did indeed suffer from various expressions of Yankee rage, but not in any greater proportion than other buildings or groups of people. On the other hand, there were very few attempts by federal forces to spare buildings just because they were churches, or to show deference to certain individuals because they happened to be clergymen. Though it is still a matter of some debate, it would seem that Sherman himself was not a particularly religious man, though several of his officers were deeply religious. For Sherman, Southerners were rebels and traitors who needed to be punished, and whether or not a portion of the enemy was ecclesiastical in nature made little difference.

[49]Rood, *Company E and the Twelfth Wisconsin Regiment*, p. 416.
[50]Glatthaar, *The March to the Sea and Beyond*, pp. 79-80.
[51]Pepper, *Personal Recollections*, p. 329.

Sherman, along with many Northerners, was aware that southern clergymen had played no small role in fanning the sectional fires that led to secession.[52] Such an awareness may have been a significant factor in Sherman's unwillingness to show favoritism to churches and clergy. It may even have been a reason, though undeclared and perhaps unconscious in nature, for the hostility demonstrated by the Union army toward several ecclesiastical institutions. An example of Sherman's personal antipathy toward southern clergymen is demonstrated in his attitude toward a Methodist minister in rural Georgia. Major George W. Nichols reported in his diary a conversation that took place between Sherman and this minister who had, by words and example, been an ardent proponent of secession and war. The minister had complained to Sherman that the general's troops were seizing and carrying off his possessions. Sherman scornfully replied to the complaining cleric: "You, sir, and such as you, had the power to resist the rebellion, but you chose to strike down the best government ever created — and for no good reason whatsoever."[53]

As Sherman prepared to enter North Carolina, instructions were given for a kinder treatment. Sherman commanded Major-General Hugh Judson Kilpatrick, who was in charge of Sherman's cavalry division: "Deal as moderately and fairly by the North Carolinians as possible, and fan the flames of discord already subsisting between them and their proud cousins of South Carolina."[54] A portion of General Blair's orders read: "The State of North Carolina is to a great extent loyal, and as such, a marked difference should be made in the manner in which we treat the people and the manner in which those of South Carolina were treated."[55]

[52]James T. Silver has written that southern "clergymen led the way to secession." *Confederate Morale and Church Propaganda* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1957), p. 110. This small volume is an excellent treatment of the involvement of the southern clergy in the cause of the Confederacy. Another fine book on this subject, with some rather surprising thoughts, is Larry E. Tise, *Proslavery: A History of the Defense of Slavery in America, 1700-1840* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1987).

[53]Nichols, *The Story of the Great March*, p. 119. Nichols goes on to recall: "While the General was speaking, his soldiers were rapidly emptying the preacher's barns of their stores of corn and forage."

[54]*The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (*OR*) (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Vol. XLVII, Pt. II, Ser. I, p. 721.

[55]Ibid., p. 760.

JAMES F. BYRNES ON FOREIGN POLICY

INTRODUCTION BY MILES S. RICHARDS*

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

Secretary of State James F. Byrnes was not known to grant many informal interviews to journalists. That fact made the South Carolinian among the least popular members of the Truman administration with the national print media. One afternoon in early March 1946, though, Secretary Byrnes summoned a select group of diplomatic correspondents to his office for an unusually frank discussion. Among those present was Robert T. Elson of *TIME*, a magazine usually critical of the policies (foreign and domestic) of President Harry S. Truman. Since the session was completely off-the-record, Elson's subsequent report was not intended for publication; consequently, the confidential summary that follows was destined for the exclusive use of the senior editors of Time Inc.

John Shaw Billings, the editorial director of Time Inc., received a copy which he placed in his professional files. This notable document is among the John Shaw Billings Time-Life-Fortune Collection at the South Caroliniana Library of the University of South Carolina. In this report, Robert T. Elson provides researchers with fresh insights into Byrnes's attitudes on American foreign policy in his last year at the U. S. Department of State.

In March 1946, James F. Byrnes was not very happy with his official situation. During the previous December, he had attended the Allied Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow. After a series of brutal negotiating sessions with Foreign Minister Vyacheslav M. Molotov, Byrnes was convinced the Soviets were not interested in resolving the myriad of post-war controversies that divided the erstwhile allies. Although Harry Truman had reached a similar conclusion, the president was less than satisfied with Byrnes's performance in Moscow. Correspondingly, the goodwill that had existed between the two men since their service together in the U. S. Senate in the 1930s rapidly faded.

In sharp contrast, when Truman had appointed Byrnes to head the State Department on July 3, 1945, most observers believed the latter was slated to be the "assistant president" for foreign policy. The new secretary of state certainly believed that was the plan. As he wrote to an old political associate

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